

25X1

Copy 1 of 9

22 August 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR : Deputy Director (Science and Technology)

SUBJECT : NRO Staff

REFERENCE : Memo for DD/S&T from DAD/OSA, Dated 18 August 1963; Subject: "Role of the Director, NRO"

1. Having said what was said in the reference, I would like to "extend my remarks" with regard to the role of the NRO Staff. It seems to me that the Staff, as it is presently composed, does not reflect the multi-service composition which is implicit in the title "National Reconnaissance Office" and the objective of establishing a true "National Reconnaissance Program".

2. The principal assignments, beginning with the Director, NRO Staff, are all tightly held by USAF. To my knowledge there is only a smattering of Navy and Army in the act, despite the existence of Program C. There is one Navy officer assigned to General Greer on the West Coast and aside from that the composition appears to be principally wearers of the light blue suit. The Director, NRO Staff, is an extremely capable but narrowly parochial Air Force Brigadier General. Historically he has been diametrically opposed to any active inclusion of CIA in programs which he regards as essentially the birthright of USAF. I admire his tenacity and his pride in his Service, but I submit that under his leadership and as principal staff adviser to the D/NRO, his viewpoint is anything but catholic on interdepartmental matters and programs.

3. Since a true NRP does involve all elements of the DOD concerned with covert reconnaissance, I would suggest that it might be wise to propose that the Director, NRO Staff be an assignment subject to rotation between Services, and further that a tour of two years be proposed for each successive incumbent. I personally believe that this sort of rotation, practiced by other DOD elements

NRO review(s) completed.

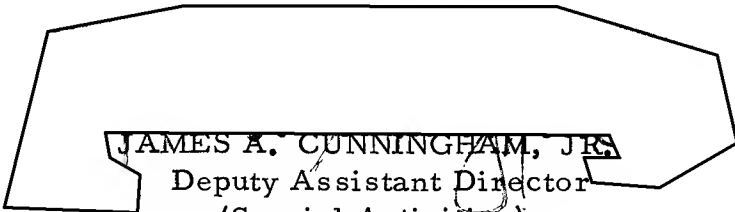


Page 2

25X1

including the JCS, would tend to diminish pragmatically the ascendant role of any single Service. It also has another advantage, and that is that it can be proposed in the abstract without in any way reflecting on the career or performance of the present incumbent or the organized ambitions of his Service to control the destinies of the NRP.

25X1

A large, irregular, hand-drawn shape that appears to be a signature or a redacted area, enclosing the typed name and title of the official.

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.  
Deputy Assistant Director  
(Special Activities)

cc: DDCI  
SA/DCI (Mr. Elder)

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20 August 1963

The Honorable Eugene G. Fubini  
Deputy Director of Defense Research & Engineering  
Department of Defense  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Gene:

This responds to your memorandum of 8 July, Subject: JCS, NRO Relations, which forwarded for comment a draft proposed agreement between D/NRO and JCS-JRC prepared by Dr. McMillan and you as a shortened version of an agreement previously submitted to Mr. McCone by Mr. Gilpatric.

I have spent much time reviewing the new, shortened version of the proposed agreement, especially in the light of Mr. McCone's letter of 11 June to Mr. Gilpatric, and our subsequent conversations. While it is a shortened version of the agreement, it does not address itself to the major points of difference that Mr. McCone so clearly covered in his letter of 11 June. I would be less than frank with you if I did not state that I am still at a complete loss to understand just what the purpose of this proposed agreement is and just what benefits will derive from it, especially in the furtherance of a program for the collection of intelligence information.

I should point out that the Director of Central Intelligence, through the Central Intelligence Agency, has established and maintained for almost ten years an Air Operations Center under which all covert overhead reconnaissance flights are planned and executed. This Air Operations Center is in existence and continues to operate successfully. As pointed out by Mr. McCone in his 11 June letter to Mr. Gilpatric, "With the exception of the U-2

**SECRET**

25X1

**SECRET**

- 2 -

25X1

25X1

and low-level reconnaissance flights over Cuba [redacted]

[redacted] all reconnaissance flights penetrating the air space of sovereign states conducted by the United States or by a third country under our direction have been executed by the operational division of CIA." The BRASS KNOB missions are clearly accepted as an overt, military activity of the United States Government. [redacted]

25X1

[redacted] conducted outside of the CIA Air Operations Center, which is under the operational control of Director, NRO.

I can see no valid reason for combining under a single entity the operational control of NRO denied territory overflights and DOD (JRC) peripheral mission flights. If this is desired with a view toward coordinating such activities, it appears unnecessary since there are already in existence procedures and well-defined understandings between the NRO (CIA operations element) and the JRC under which the JCS is kept fully aware of NRO overflight activities on a very current basis. If the problem here is one of higher-level policy, then the coordination is effected at the Special Group (5412) meetings and I would support a move on the part of the Department of Defense to have a JCS representative available at such meetings when denied area overflights are discussed.

I am sure you realize that existing relationships in the field of covert overflights between CIA operational elements, acting in behalf of the NRO, and the United States Air Forces are close and totally adequate. If the JRC, which is responsible for overt peripheral flights, were to be injected into this relationship, it would appear to me to complicate and encumber what are now quite workable methods for technical and operational coordination and technical and planning support for denied area overflights.

I agree that during periods of war, or at imminence of hostilities, or in theaters of active, military operations, or in periods of high tension, it would be appropriate for higher authority (and I would consider higher authority to be either a Presidential directive or mutual agreement between the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense) to authorize overt,

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- 3 -

military overflights of denied areas -- in such a case, this would be clearly a military responsibility and should be assumed by the JCS in areas so designated. In this connection, there is already an Emergency War Plans Operations Order to which CIA and SAC have agreed which facilitates such action. During the Cuban crisis such a transfer was effected smoothly and expeditiously, as you know.

The initial proposal for an NRO/JCS Agreement was generated sometime back in April and has been through a number of revisions at the working level as well as several at the policy level. We seem to be no closer to an agreement than we were at the beginning, and I think this is primarily because we do not have a meeting of the minds as to just what the purpose of the agreement is, i. e., what is it to accomplish that is not now being accomplished in a perfectly adequate and entirely satisfactory manner, what errors of omission or commission is it designed to correct, what transfer or realignment of responsibilities is it designed to effect, and basically what is being done that should not be done and what is not being done that should be done?

In the belief, then, that it may be desirable from the standpoint of the Department of Defense to have the NRO execute, supervise, guide, and control those specific, denied area overflights now being conducted by JRC -- i. e., BRASS KNOB [redacted] and in accord with my expressed agreement that the NRO should be prepared to effect transfer to the military of certain overflights during periods of hostilities, I have attached a draft proposed agreement which I think will clearly put these two factors in proper perspective.

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In the event it does not, I suggest that we get together around the table at your convenience to see what additional articles of what treaties need to be negotiated -- I am certain we all have only one mission in mind in this connection -- the most expeditious collection of usable intelligence information with the least disruption of command prerogatives and the most economical utilization of all of our combined resources.

Faithfully yours,

/s/ [redacted]

Marshall S. Carter  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Deputy Director

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**DRAFT**

**AGREEMENT  
D/NRO and JCS-JRC**

1. This agreement establishes arrangements for NRO supervision and control of aircraft reconnaissance flights over denied areas or other sensitive regions.
2. In order to ensure that technical and operational coordination is provided between JCS operated missions and NRO operated missions; that NRO and JCS are kept fully informed on all mission planning and mission status; that necessary logistic and operational support can be provided with adequate lead times, the D/NRO and the JCS agree that:
  - a. The Chief, JRC, will report to the D/NRO and will make the services of JRC available as the D/NRO directs, for the implementation of those aircraft reconnaissance operations conducted by the JRC over denied areas or over other sensitive regions.
  - b. The duties of the JRC will be in accordance with existing directives, understandings, and arrangements, amplified where necessary to reflect additional functions assigned to the JRC by the D/NRO in accordance with a., above.

**SECRET**

- 2 -

3. During periods of war or tension as determined by Higher Authority or as agreed by the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense, and over such areas as may be designated by them at that time, airborne reconnaissance missions will become the responsibility of the JCS and necessary control and resources will be transferred from the NRO as required.

4. Except as specified above, nothing in this agreement alters existing arrangements for the conduct of NRO airborne reconnaissance missions and the technical and logistic support thereof by the JCS and the military services, nor does it alter the basic NRO agreement of 13 March 1963 between the Director of Central Intelligence and the Secretary of Defense.

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON 25, D C

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NRO

21 Aug. 63

Dear Gene -

So many papers are being written  
for posterity that I'm practically on  
my posterior trying to keep up with  
them — here's my contribution!

The important thing to me is to  
insure that there is a meeting of the  
minds as to the purpose of the agreement —  
and in this vein, I am wearing my  
DDCI hat rather than my CIA hat — This  
also insures my not being parochial! Please  
try this on for size —

Faithfully yours

